

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:10 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Jeffrey and Marilyn Katzenberg; film director Rob Reiner, founder, I Am Your Child campaign; and Mario Cuomo, former New York Governor. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Signing the Emergency Farm Financial Relief Act
August 12, 1998

Today I am signing into law S. 2344, the "Emergency Farm Financial Relief Act," which will allow farmers to receive their market transition payments earlier than usual. This legislation is necessary in a year marked by low crop prices, a series of natural disasters, and other financial strains in agricultural markets. By speeding up these payments, this law will help many rural American communities and farm families, particularly those facing financial pressures through no fault of their own. Secretary of Agriculture Glickman proposed this idea earlier this year, and I am pleased that the Congress has moved forward on it. However, this legislation fails to provide any additional direct Federal income support payments; it simply accelerates them. We must take further action to provide a proper safety net for family farmers during this difficult year.

There is more we can do. Earlier this month, the Department of Agriculture purchased 535,000 tons of wheat for donation to hungry people overseas, the first step in the plan I announced in July to purchase more than 80 million bushels of American wheat and wheat flour. This will help strengthen crop prices and meet humanitarian needs abroad. I have also urged the Congress to move forward on the proposal of Senators Dorgan and Conrad to provide at least \$500 million in emergency assistance to farmers who have been hit hard by natural disasters and low prices. Such emergency legislation would provide a supplemental crop insurance benefit to producers with multiple-year losses, compensate farmers whose crop and pasture land has been flooded, and provide emergency feed assistance to livestock producers suffering from drought. The Dorgan/Conrad proposal has

already passed the Senate, and I urge the full Congress to approve their amendment and send it to me for signature so we can give hard-pressed farmers the relief they deserve as soon as possible.

Moreover, Secretary Glickman and I have challenged the Congress to improve the farm safety net in a number of very specific ways. Our proposals would extend the term of marketing assistance loans; give farmers real flexibility in planting by allowing them to insure new and different crops; make credit more widely available and modify the "one strike" policy for farmers who had a debt write-down; use leftover Export Enhancement Program funds in future years for food aid and other purposes; let farmers use USDA-guaranteed operating loans to refinance; and expand and improve crop insurance. Finally, the Congress must also end its delay on funding for the International Monetary Fund so that we can help stabilize the markets in Asia that are such important customers for our farm exports.

These are tough times for many American farmers. We must continue to look for ways to help our farm communities get through them.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
 August 12, 1998.

NOTE: S. 2344, approved August 12, was assigned Public Law No. 105-228.

Memorandum on Assistance for Federal Employees Affected by the Embassy Bombings in Kenya and Tanzania

August 12, 1998

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Assistance for Federal Employees Affected by the Bombings at U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania

I am deeply saddened by the loss of life and suffering caused by the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. I convey my deepest

sympathy and heartfelt sorrow to those affected by these senseless acts of violence. The Federal Government is committed to assist employees and their families in responding to this tragedy.

As part of this effort, I ask the heads of executive departments and agencies having Federal civilian employees affected by the bombings (including Foreign Service National employees) to excuse from duty, without charge to leave or loss of pay, any such employee who is prevented from reporting to work or faced with a personal emergency because of the bombings and who can be spared from his or her usual responsibilities. This policy should also be applied to any employee who is needed for security, relief, or recovery efforts as authorized by the chief of mission at each embassy.

I am also directing the Office of Personnel Management to establish an emergency leave transfer program under which employees in any executive agency may donate unused annual leave for transfer to employees of the same or other agencies who were adversely affected by the bombings and who need additional time off for recovery. Workers' compensation benefits are available in the case of Federal employees who were injured or killed in the bombing, as are certain other benefits. I am further directing the Office of Personnel Management and the Department of Labor to provide additional information and assistance as appropriate.

William J. Clinton

Remarks at a Memorial Service for Victims of the Embassy Bombings in Kenya and Tanzania at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland

August 13, 1998

To the members of the families here, Secretary Albright, Secretary Cohen, members of the Cabinet, Members of Congress, leaders of the Armed Forces, members of the diplomatic corps, friends, and we say a special appreciation to the representatives here from Kenya and Tanzania.

Every person here today would pray not to be here. But we could not be anywhere else, for we come to honor 12 proud sons

and daughters who perished half a world away but never left America behind, who carried with them the love of their families, the respect of their countrymen, and above all, the ideals for which America stands. They perished in the service of the country for which they gave so much in life.

To their families and friends, the rest of your fellow Americans have learned a little bit about your loved ones in the past few days. Of course, we will never know them as you did or remember them as you will, as a new baby, a proud graduate, a beaming bride or groom, a reassuring voice on the phone from across the ocean, a tired but happy traveler at an airport, bags stuffed with gifts, arms outstretched. Nothing can bring them back, but nothing can erase the lives they led, the difference they made, the joy they brought.

We can only hope that even in grief you can take pride and solace in the gratitude all the rest of us have for the service they gave.

The men and women who serve in our Embassies all around this world do hard work that is not always fully appreciated and not even understood by many of their fellow Americans. They protect our interests and promote our values abroad. They are diplomats and doctors and drivers, bookkeepers and technicians and military guards. Far from home, they endure hardships, often at great risk.

These 12 Americans came from diverse backgrounds. If you see their pictures, you know they are a portrait of America today and of America's tomorrow. But as different as they were, each of them had an adventurous spirit, a generous soul. Each relished the chance to see the world and to make it better.

They were: a senior diplomat I had the honor to meet twice, and his son, who proudly worked alongside him this summer; a budget officer, a wife and mother who had just spent her vacation caring for her aged parents; a State Department worker who looked forward to being back home with her new grandson; a Foreign Service officer born in India who became an American citizen and traveled the world with her family for her new country; a Marine sergeant, the son of very proud parents; an Air Force sergeant